

Models for Staffing a Grantmaking Foundation

Every foundation has responsibilities beyond deciding on grants. At minimum, minutes must be written, IRS tax returns must be prepared, and checks must be cut and mailed for approved grants. Usually some correspondence is also involved. Some foundations do much more than these minimal tasks.

Each foundation must decide what tasks and activities are appropriate and how they will be carried out. There are many options for getting the work done. It could be done by using any one of the following options or a combination of a few:

Donated services from

1. The donor as a volunteer
2. The donor's personal or business staff
(staff would be paid, but not by the foundation)
3. Trustees as volunteers
4. A trustee's personal or business staff
(staff would be paid, but not by the foundation)
5. Non-trustee family member(s)

Hired services (may be fee for service, contract, or employee)

1. Accounting firm
2. Bookkeeper (family or non-family)
3. Investment advisor(s)
4. Philanthropic management firm or expert
5. Community foundation
6. Bank or law firm with services for foundations
7. Administrator (family or non-family)
8. Executive director (family or non-family)
9. Program officer (family or non-family)
10. Consultants for a special project